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ALL NEW
MONSTER HUNTERS
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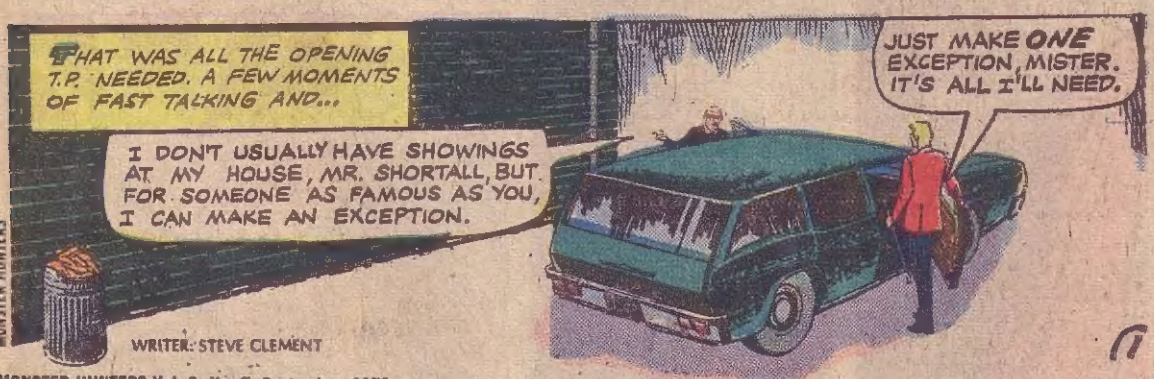
PUBLICATION
00124

MEET T.R SHORTALL, DEALER IN RARE AND PRECIOUS OBJECTS D'ART. HE IS KNOWN PUBLICLY AS A RE-KNOWNED CRITIC, A LEGITIMATE DEALER, AND THE MAN TO SEE FOR A LITTLE SOMETHING 'SPECIAL'. IF SHORTALL IS ALSO THE GREATEST LIVING ART THIEF IN THE WORLD.
T.P. FIRST HEARD OF THIS SHOP, THE BELSTAPLE GALLERY, OVER A YEAR AGO, AT A PARTY. HE HAD LISTENED INTENTLY TO THE TENSION IN THE VOICE OF THE MAN WHO DESCRIBED WHAT HE BE-LIEVED TO BE THE FAMED VARICK MINIATURES, ONCE OWNED BY GENGHIS KHAN THE TERRIBLE. AND T.P. WAS HERE NOW, TO FIND...AND TO GET THESE PRICELESS GEMS, IF THEY TRULY DID EXIST.
WHAT TRASH. WHERE WOULD THE OLD MAN HIDE SUCH VALUABLE STATUETTES, IF HE HAD THEM? NOT IN THE BANK, OR IN PLAIN SIGHT. WHERE ...HIS HOUSE!
EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT I DON'T SEEM TO BE ABLE TO LOCATE THAT PARTICULAR VASE. PERHAPS IT IS AT MY HOUSE!
STATUETTE
D-7677


THAT WAS ALL THE OPENING T.P. NEEDED. A FEW MOMENTS OF FAST TALKING AND...
I DON'T USUALLY HAVE SHOWINGS AT MY HOUSE, MR. SHORTALL, BUT FOR SOMEONE AS FAMOUS AS YOU, I CAN MAKE AN EXCEPTION.
JUST MAKE ONE EXCEPTION, MISTER. IT'S ALL I'LL NEED.
MONSTER HUNTERS
WRITER: STEVE CLEMENT

MONSTER HUNTERS Vol. 2, No. 7, September, 1976,
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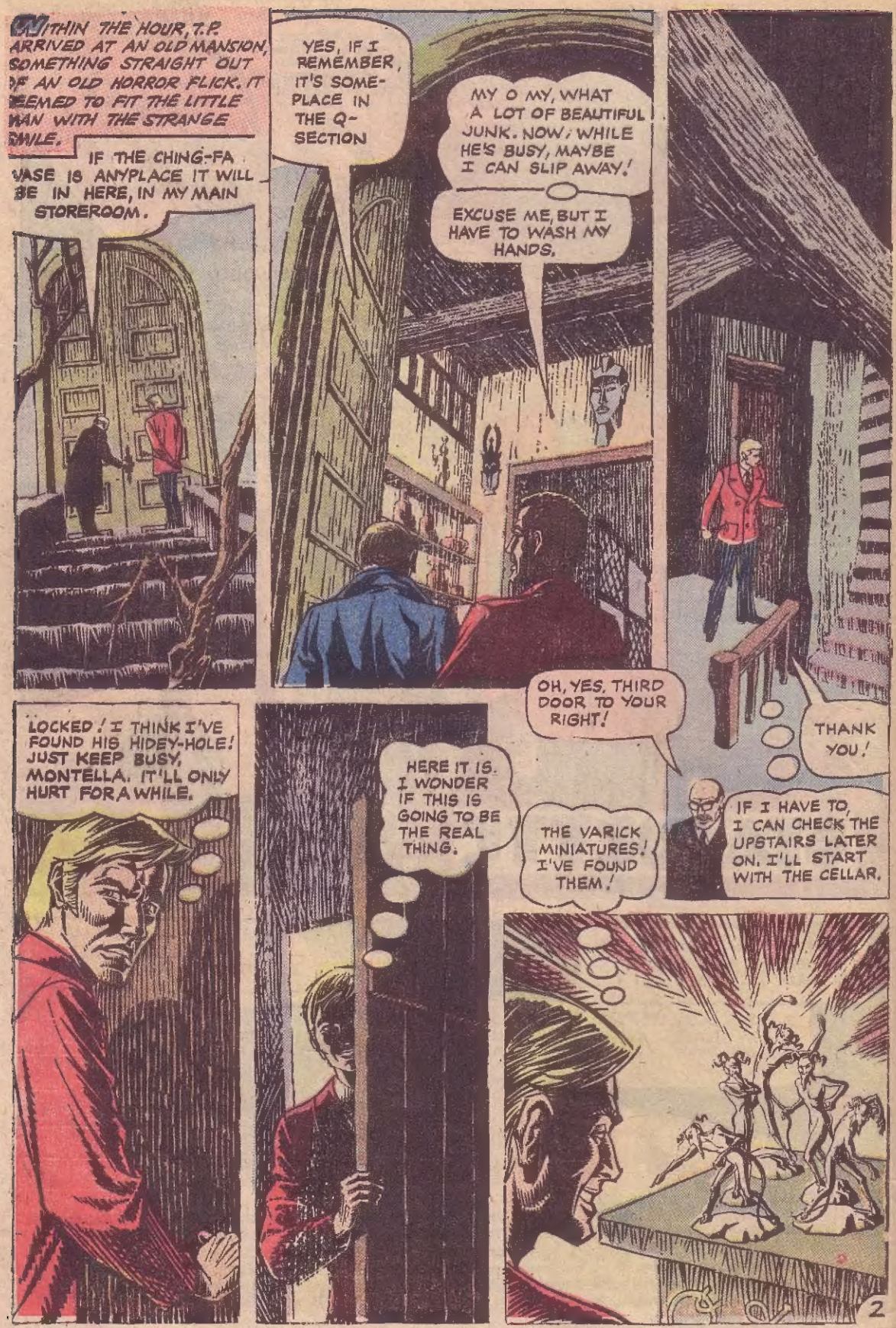
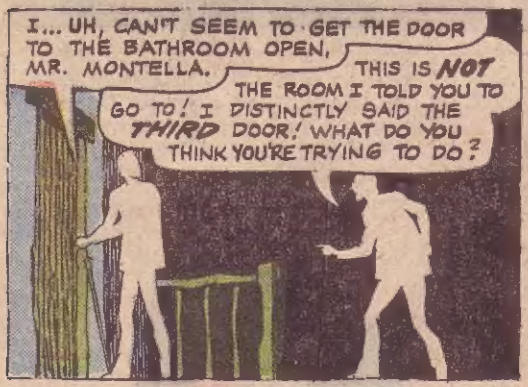
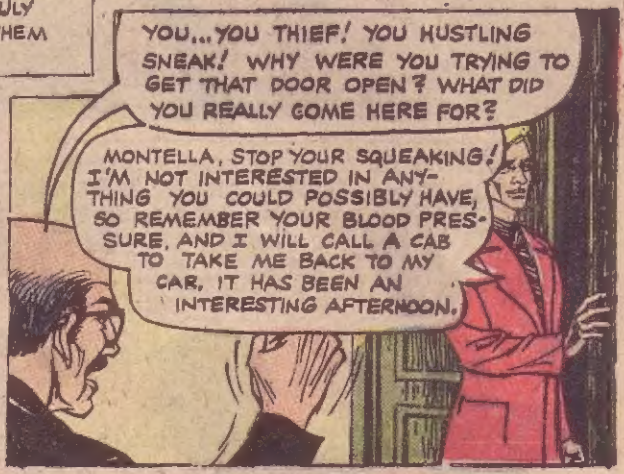
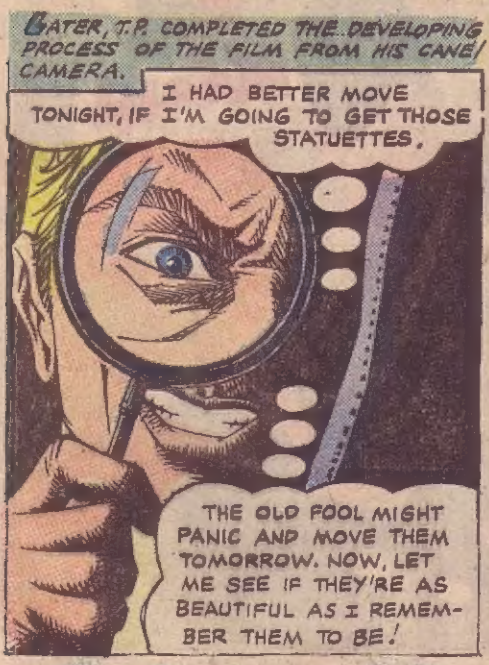

WITHIN THE HOUR, T.P. ARRIVED AT AN OLD MANSION, SOMETHING STRAIGHT OUT OF AN OLD HORROR FLICK. IT SEEMED TO FIT THE LITTLE MAN WITH THE STRANGE SMILE.
IF THE CHING-FA VASE IS ANYPLACE IT WILL BE IN HERE, IN MY MAIN STOREROOM.
YES, IF I REMEMBER, IT'S SOMEPLACE IN THE Q-SECTION
MY O MY, WHAT A LOT OF BEAUTIFUL JUNK. NOW, WHILE HE'S BUSY, MAYBE I CAN SLIP AWAY!
EXCUSE ME, BUT I HAVE TO WASH MY HANDS.
OH, YES, THIRD DOOR TO YOUR RIGHT!
THANK YOU!
IF I HAVE TO, I CAN CHECK THE UPSTAIRS LATER ON. I'LL START WITH THE CELLAR.
LOCKED! I THINK I'VE FOUND HIS HIDEY-HOLE! JUST KEEP BUSY, MONTELLA. IT'LL ONLY HURT FOR A WHILE.
HERE IT IS. I WONDER IF THIS IS GOING TO BE THE REAL THING.
THE VARICK MINIATURES! I'VE FOUND THEM!

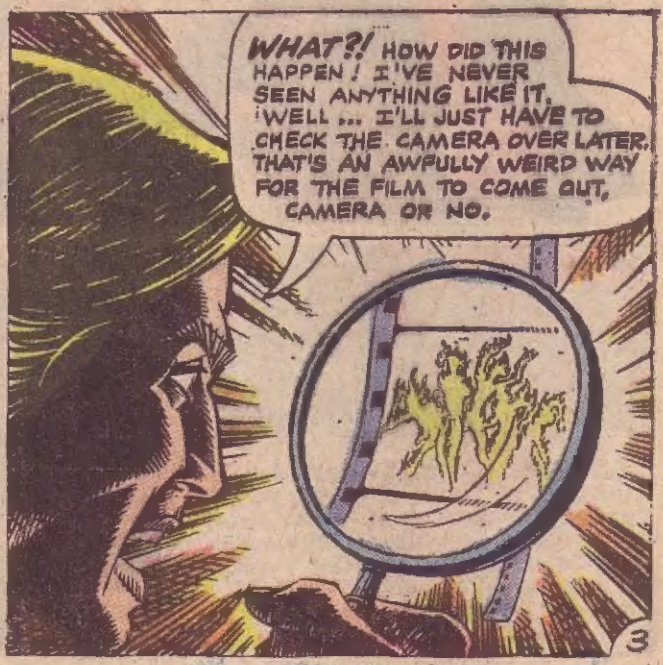
MR. SHORTALL! I'VE FOUND IT! MR. SHORTALL!
DAMN! HE WOULD HAVE TO INTERFERE NOW! I'VE GOT TO GET PICTURES OF THIS! NOW THAT I KNOW THEY TRULY EXIST, I'LL HAVE TO RETURN FOR THEM SOME OTHER TIME!

MR. SHORTALL! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
JUST GIVE ME FIVE MORE SECONDS!


I... UH, CAN'T SEEM TO GET THE DOOR TO THE BATHROOM OPEN, MR. MONTELLA.
THIS IS NOT THE ROOM I TOLD YOU TO GO TO! I DISTINCTLY SAID THE THIRD DOOR! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TRYING TO DO?


YOU...YOU THIEF! YOU HUSTLING SNEAK! WHY WERE YOU TRYING TO GET THAT DOOR OPEN? WHAT DID YOU REALLY COME HERE FOR?
MONTELLA, STOP YOUR SQUEAKING! I'M NOT INTERESTED IN ANYTHING YOU COULD POSSIBLY HAVE, SO REMEMBER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE, AND I WILL CALL A CAB TO TAKE ME BACK TO MY CAR. IT HAS BEEN AN INTERESTING AFTERNOON.


LATER, T.P. COMPLETED THE DEVELOPING PROCESS OF THE FILM FROM HIS CANE CAMERA.
I HAD BETTER MOVE TONIGHT, IF I'M GOING TO GET THOSE STATUETTES.
THE OLD FOOL MIGHT PANIC AND MOVE THEM TOMORROW. NOW, LET ME SEE IF THEY'RE AS BEAUTIFUL AS I REMEMBER THEM TO BE!


WHAT?! HOW DID THIS HAPPEN! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT. WELL... I'LL JUST HAVE TO CHECK THE CAMERA OVER LATER. THAT'S AN AWFULLY WEIRD WAY FOR THE FILM TO COME OUT, CAMERA OR NO.

T.P.'S WORK WENT SMOOTHLY. HE ARRIVED SMOOTHLY, HE BROKE-AND-ENTERED SMOOTHLY, AND HE REACHED THE BASEMENT ROOM SMOOTHLY.
MY GOD, THESE ARE SO BEAUTIFULLY GROTESQUE, I'M ALMOST TEMPTED TO KEEP THEM FOR MYSELF! BUT WHEN I THINK OF THE PRICES THEY'LL BRING, I GUESS I'LL SETTLE FOR A PICASSO OR TWO.
WITH THE ARRIVAL OF STEPHAN MONTELLA THINGS GOT DECIDEDLY UN-SMOOTH!
YOU! I JUST KNEW IT! THIEF I CALLED YOU, AND THIEF YOU ARE! I'VE PLAYED THIS GAME BEFORE, BOY! RUN WHILE YOU HAVE THE CHANCE!
GAME?! THIS IS NO GAME, OLD MAN!
I HAVE PLAYED IT BEFORE, WITH MEN BETTER THAN YOU, FOOL! I CANNOT BE DEFEATED, I CANNOT BE DESTROYED!
REALLY? YOU MUST REMEMBER TO REMIND ME OF THAT SOMEDAY ... WHEN YOU RETURN IN ANOTHER LIFE! BECAUSE, BABY, I JUST SIGNED YOU OUT OF THIS ONE!
AGGHH
WITHIN MOMENTS...
UMPH! THERE. I TURNED THIS OVEN UP FULL SO WHEN THEY FIND YOU THEY PROBABLY WON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS! AND IN A FEW HOURS, WHEN THIS THING OVERLOADS, AND THE HOUSE BURNS DOWN, NO ONE WILL EVER CONNECT ME TO YOU OR THE VARICK STATUETTES!

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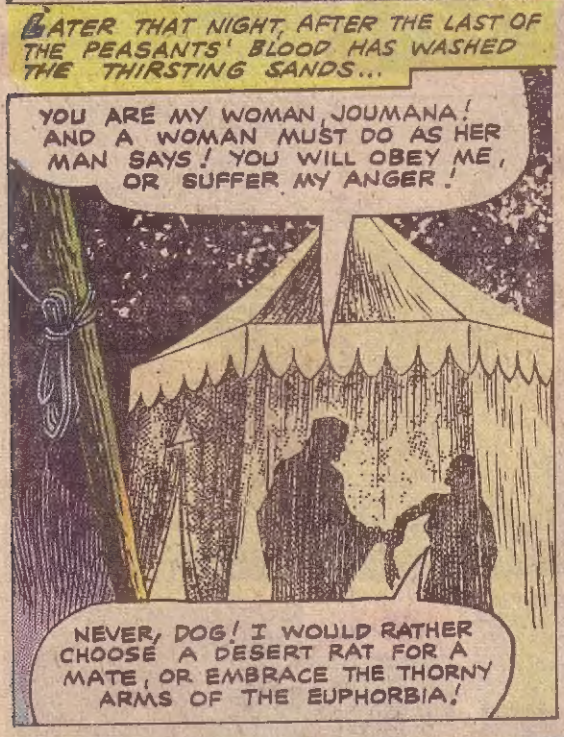
WHUPS! I THINK I'D PREFER THIS IN THE FORM OF SLAG, . NO FINGERPRINTS THAT WAY!
NO!
YOU LOSE, MR. SHORTALL! THE GAME IS OVER... ALL BUT THE PENALTIES!
THE GAME IS THEFT, SHORTALL! ALL THE GREATS HAVE STOLEN THE VARICK MINIATURES AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER. GENGHIS KAHN... LO TANG... KING SIDHARMA... AND HUNDREDS OF OTHER THIEVES LESS FAMOUS, LIKE YOURSELF. THEY HAVE ALL KILLED ME, AND EACH IN THEIR TURN, HAVE ALL DIED.
NO!
NO! I SWEAR, I DIDN'T MEAN, TO KILL YOU!
OH, COME NOW, CERTAINLY YOU CAN LIE MORE ORIGINALLY THAN THAT. PERHAPS IF YOU SAID YOU WERE POSSESSED OR SOMETHING EQUALLY AS SILLY! IF YOU WANTED THOSE STATUETTES SO BADLY, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD TAKE THEM OUT OF THE BAG SO WE CAN BOTH LOOK AT THEM!
WHAT IS THIS? WHAT ARE YOU!!
I WORK FOR HIS MAJESTY, LORD SATAN. I GUESS YOU MIGHT CALL ME HIS JAILER. I IMPRISON ANY DEMONS THAT GET OUT OF LINE BELOW. MY SALARY FOR THIS JOB IS THE REASON, WHEN YOU KILLED ME, THAT I DIDN'T STAY DEAD. I'M IMMORTAL. I HAVE TO BE!

OH DEAR GOD!!
I'LL BE BACK IN CUSTODY OF THOSE LITTLE IMPS AGAIN SOON, BECAUSE THEY STILL HAVE A FEW MORE MILLENNIA TO SERVE ON THEIR SENTENCES. BUT I SUPPOSE THEY'LL GET YOU WHERE YOU'RE GOING AS FAST AS ANYTHING WILL! GOOD-BYE, MR. SHORTALL!
AHHGHH
WRONG PLEA, SHORTALL. 'OH HELL' WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE!
AND AS FOR YOU IMPS! BACK INTO THE KILN! I'M GOING TO HAVE TO RE-BAKE YOU BEFORE SATAN DEMOTES ME TO HEAD OF THE PITS BELOW!

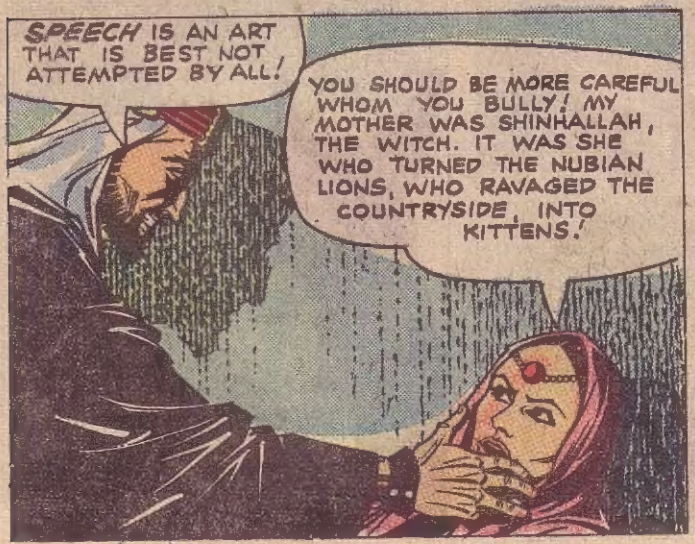
THIEVES WILL COME AND THIEVES WILL GO, BUT STEPHEN MONTELLA, SATAN'S WARDER, WILL ALWAYS BE THERE.
I JUST KILLED THE OLD GUY IN BED. WE MADE IT! WE'RE RICH! AND IT WAS ALL SO EASY!
ALL GAMES ARE EASY, EXCEPT WHEN YOU PLAY WITH STEPHEN MONTELLA... AND LOSE.
END

DEATH COMES IN MANY STRANGE FORMS! TO THE GOAT HERDSMEN OF 10TH CENTURY ARABIA, DEATH APPEARED AS A MAN, ALTHOUGH SOME MAY SAY HE WAS LESS THAN THAT! DEATH SMILED WHEN AKHBAD BEN-AHMAD RODE, FOR DEATH KNEW THAT HE WOULD SEND SOULS TO THE DARK DOMAIN!
AKHBAD KNEW THAT THERE WAS LITTLE IN THE PEASANT VILLAGE! A FEW COINS OF SILVER, A FEW VIALS OF MYRRH... NOTHING MORE! EXCEPT THE WOMAN JOUMANA... WHO WOULD MAKE HIM...
A FITTING WIFE
ATTACK, MY SOLDIERS ... AND LET BLOOD IRRIGATE THEIR FALLOW FIELDS, AND FIRE WARM THEIR CHILLY SKIES!
LET THEM KNOW THE POWER OF AKHBAD BEN-AHMAD... THE SWORD OF ALLAH!
WRITER· JOE MOLLOY
D-7724

HIS INSTRUCTIONS ARE CURT... YET CLEAR!
KILL THEM ALL... EXCEPT THE WOMAN, JOUMANA!
I SHALL KEEP HER FOR MYSELF! SHE WILL BE ADDED TO THE OTHER CONCUBINES IN THE HAREM OF AKHBAD BEN-AHMAD!

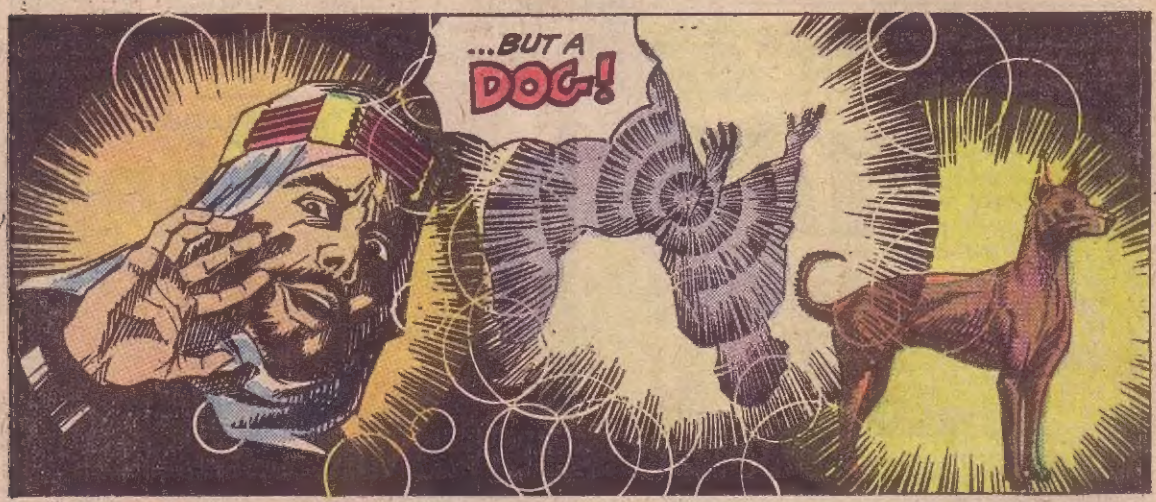

LATER THAT NIGHT, AFTER THE LAST OF THE PEASANTS' BLOOD HAS WASHED THE THIRSTING SANDS...
YOU ARE MY WOMAN, JOUMANA! AND A WOMAN MUST DO AS HER MAN SAYS! YOU WILL OBEY ME, OR SUFFER MY ANGER!
NEVER, DOG! I WOULD RATHER CHOOSE A DESERT RAT FOR A MATE, OR EMBRACE THE THORNY ARMS OF THE EUPHORBIA!

HIS BLOW... POWERED BY THE COWARDLY FEAR IN HIS HEART...
WRETCHED WOMAN! I SHALL TEACH YOU HOW TO ADDRESS YOUR MASTER! YOUR TONGUE HAS NEED OF MUCH TRAINING, I SEE!


SPEECH IS AN ART THAT IS BEST NOT ATTEMPTED BY ALL!
YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL WHOM YOU BULLY! MY MOTHER WAS SHINHALLAH, THE WITCH. IT WAS SHE WHO TURNED THE NUBIAN LIONS, WHO RAVAGED THE COUNTRYSIDE, INTO KITTENS!

WHEN SHE DIED, AT THE HANDS OF OUR CRUEL CALIPH, HER MAGIC WAS NOT LOST! HER SORCERIES WERE PASSED ONTO ME... HER DAUGHTER! I TOO POSSESS THE SECRET MYSTERIES OF METAMORPHISM... AS YOU ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS!
2

SHE LIFTED HER ARM, AND HE SHUDDERED A TRIFLE! BUT FEAR IS A COWARDS CONSTANT COMPANION!
NO MAN WOULD EVER STRIKE A WOMAN! THEREFORE YOU CAN NOT BE A MAN...


...BUT A DOG!

LIKE THE DOG HE WAS, HE SCOURED THE RAT-INFESTED GARBAGE BINS IN LICE-CARPETED BACK ALLEYS! FOR DAYS HE LIVED LIKE A SCAVENGER, BECOMING NEARLY CONTENT IN HIS NEW LIFE...

...UNTIL...
THE HOME OF MAKHAMED ...THE WIZARD! IF ANY MAN CAN RETURN ME TO MY NORMAL FORM, IT IS HE!

He entered, and the scents of forbidden odors assailed his sensitive nostrils!

What foul concoction could Makhamed be brewing today? It was he who smoked the rats out of the Caliph's palace with his sulphurous candles!

Eye of cat and tail of newt, skin of bat and mandrake root!

Toe of frog and ear of ape, bone of hog and juice of grape!

Akhbad Ben-Ahmad reached for a quill...

Huh? A dog! How dare the vile creature enter my chambers and disturb my belongings!

...And, on a dried parchment, proceeded to scrawl the word...

I have written finer verses, but none so important!

So! You are a *man* turned into a dog by some enchantress with whom you tried to become overly familiar, I suppose!

No matter! It takes but little to undo such a spell! And I could use the practice!

I need licorice from Persia, badiana from Cathay, fennel from India, senna from Egypt... and perhaps just a dash of antimony!

My wares are a bit low! I must remember to place an order with the next eastern bound caravan!

His potion completed, the next step was up to the dog...

Drink deep, and may your true form be known!

Not the tastiest elixir my tongue has ever touched... but anything would be better than remaining a dog!

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THAT NIGHT, THE DOG FOUND SLEEP A FEVERISH EXERCISE! AWAKENING, HE KNEW THAT THE SPELL HAD BEEN BROKEN! HE LOOKED UPON HIS TRUE FORM ONCE AGAIN!
I AM ONCE AGAIN A MAN!
MORE THAN A MAN, AKHBAD BEN-AHMAD! YOU ARE MUCH, MUCH MORE THAN MERELY A MAN!
YES, I KNOW WHO YOU ARE ...THE WEALTHY COMMANDER, AKHBAD BEN-AHMAD, LORD OF THE SULTAN'S FINEST TROOPS.. AND CURATOR OF A VAST FORTUNE AS WELL!
I CAN REPAY YOU BY LETTING EXCESS BLOOD OUT OF YOUR THROAT! NO LONGER WILL THE PRESSURE BUILD UP IN YOUR BRAIN AND CAUSE YOU HEADACHES!
YOU CAN AFFORD TO PAY ME WELL FOR THE SERVICE I HAVE RENDERED YOU!
AKHAMED TURNED TO FLEE, BUT FOR ONE TRAINED IN THE ARTS OF WAR, A FLEEING MAN IS AN EASY TARGET!
THE WIZARD WILL NEVER RECEIVE A SINGLE QURSH FROM MY TREASURY! HE WOULD BLACKMAIL ME UNTIL THE END OF MY DAYS! IT IS FITTING THAT HIS END BE FIRST!
5

AKHBAD BEN-AHMAD PACED THE STREETS TO HIS QUARTERS! THE MURDER HE HAD JUST COMMITTED DID NOT SATIATE HIS THIRST FOR VENGEANCE! THERE WERE OTHER VILE PLANS BEING FORMULATED IN HIS MIND!

I CANNOT SO EASILY SLAY THE WOMAN, JOUMANA! SUCH THINGS ARE NOT DONE! YET THE SULTAN WOULD KNOW HOW TO HANDLE SUCH A MATTER! HIS TORTURE DUNGEONS ARE THE DELIGHT OF THE MAD!

HIS SERVANTS DID NOT MISS HIM! THEY WERE ACCUSTOMED TO HIS COMINGS AND GOINGS! BUT THERE WAS ONE WHO WAS **MOST** SURPRISED AT HIS RETURN!

AKHBAD? HOW DID YOU ESCAPE THE CURSE?

HER ONLY ANSWER WAS THE BACK OF A CALLOUSED WAR HAND! PAIN CAME TO HER IN A QUICK FLASH OF COLOR... BEFORE THE BLACKNESS BEGAN TO FILL HER EYES!

WHEN SHE IS BOUND AND UNABLE TO USE HER ARMS TO CAST SPELLS, SHE WILL BE HELPLESS AND I WILL TAKE HER TO THE SULTAN AND EXPLAIN MY SITUATION!

THE CALIPH... FAT, UGLY AND **CRUEL**... DISLIKED BY ALL WHO KNEW HIM AND EVEN THOSE WHO DID NOT!

AND THAT IS MY STORY, O SULTAN!

EXCEPT FOR MY SLAYING OF THE WIZARD! THERE IS NO NEED FOR THE SULTAN TO KNOW ALL!

I HAVE COME TO YOU, BELOVED KING, FOR JUSTICE! I LEAVE THE FATE OF THE WOMAN AT YOUR DOOR!

MY COMMANDER HAS FOUGHT ***TOO*** MANY BATTLES! HE IS ***INSANE!*** YET HIS CONSORT IS BEAUTIFUL! WHEN I LOOK INTO HER EYES I KNOW I MUST HAVE HER!

AKHBAD BEN-AMAD, YOUR STORY IS AN OBVIOUS FABRICATION! YOU INSULT MY INTELLIGENCE BY EXPECTING ME TO BELIEVE SUCH AN OUTLANDISH TALE! FOR THIS AND SLANDERING SUCH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, YOU WILL BE ***EXECUTED!***

NO, YOUR HIGHNESS! I SWEAR IT IS THE TRUTH! I BEAR NO FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THE WOMAN! MY STORY IS ***TRUE!***

16

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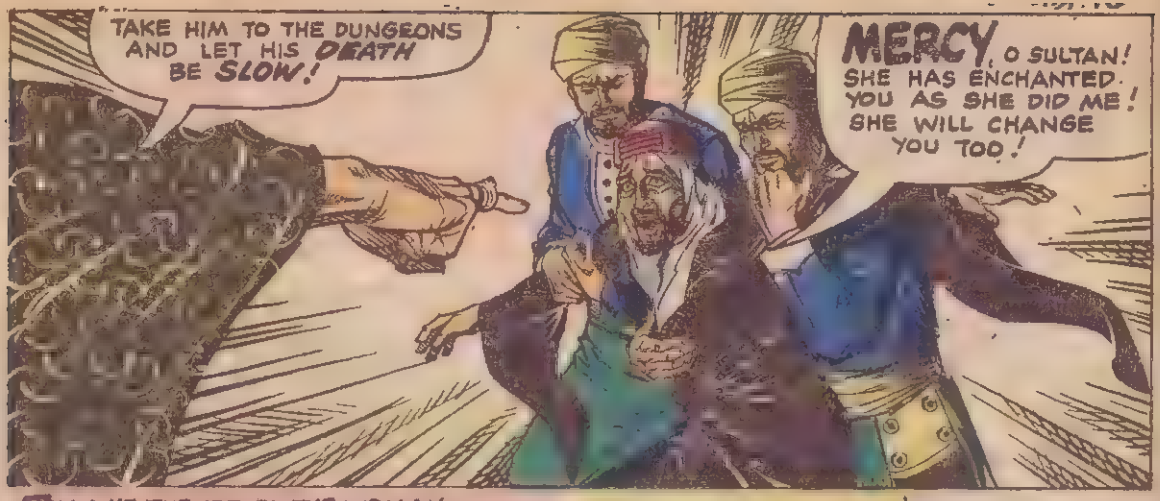
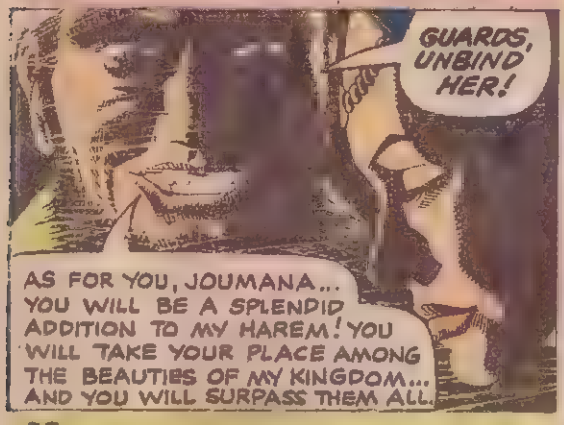


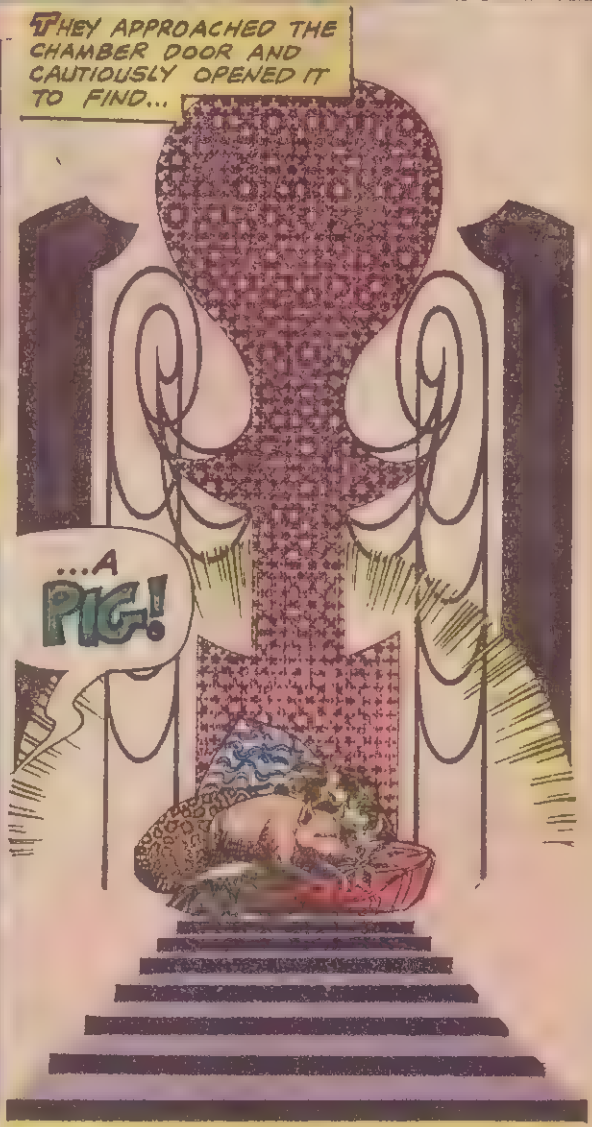
THEN HE TURNED TO THE WOMAN...


GUARDS, UNBIND HER!
AS FOR YOU, JOUMANA... YOU WILL BE A SPLENDID ADDITION TO MY HAREM! YOU WILL TAKE YOUR PLACE AMONG THE BEAUTIES OF MY KINGDOM... AND YOU WILL SURPASS THEM ALL.

HE SENT HIS ATTENDANTS AWAY, YET THEY WERE SURPRISED WHEN HE DID NOT SUMMON THEM THE FOLLOWING DAY!

THE SULTAN HAS NOT YET COMMANDED HIS BREAKFAST!
HIS BREAKFAST! THE SUNDIAL HAS LONG SINCE PASSED THE NOON HOUR! WE HAD BETTER CHECK! THE SULTAN HAS NEVER BEFORE NEGLECTED EITHER HIS BREAKFAST OR HIS LUNCH... NOT EVEN FOR A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN!

THEY APPROACHED THE CHAMBER DOOR AND CAUTIOUSLY OPENED IT TO FIND...

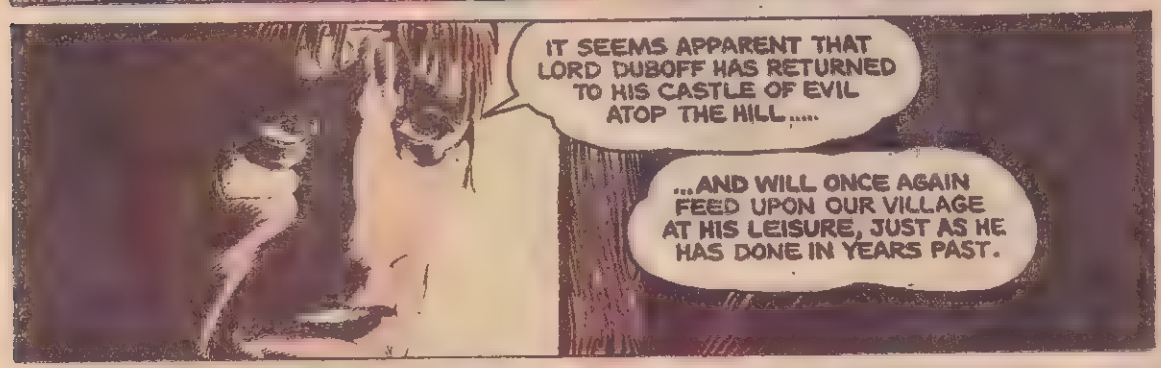


THE WOMAN, JOUMANA, WAS GONE, AND NO WIZARD ADMITTED TO KNOWING ANY WAY TO REVERSE THE SPELL UPON THE EVIL TYRANT! DURING THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED, THE HUGE HOG WAS A POPULAR EXHIBIT AT THE BAZAAR!

EEEEEEE!
D-8058 1

BLOOD OATH
THIS TALE TAKES PLACE IN KOSLOFF....ONE OF MANY SMALL VILLAGES SCATTERED AMONG THE CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS.
WHY THIS PARTICULAR VILLAGE?....BECAUSE KOSLOFF HAS FALLEN VICTIM TO THE BLOODLUST OF A VAMPIRE! HERE, ALSO, IS THE HOME OF HENREY RHER, A MOST UNLIKELY MONSTER HUNTER!
CLEARLY THE WORK OF A VAMPIRE! THE THIRD MURDER THIS WEEK!
THAT SCREAM.... O' MY GOD!! LENA?!!
EDITOR: GEORGE WILDMAN
STORY/ART: ZECK

THAT MONSTER HAS SLAIN MY DAUGHTER!!
WHEN WILL IT BE ENOUGH... WHEN WILL HE LEAVE US ALONE?!!
I FEAR IT WILL NOT BE SOON, ANDREW....
TOO MANY HAVE DIED! THIS VAMPIRE PREYS ON OUR VILLAGE ALONE!


IT SEEMS APPARENT THAT LORD DUBOFF HAS RETURNED TO HIS CASTLE OF EVIL ATOP THE HILL.....
...AND WILL ONCE AGAIN FEED UPON OUR VILLAGE AT HIS LEISURE, JUST AS HE HAS DONE IN YEARS PAST.

IF THIS IS TRUE, THEN WE MUST BAND TOGETHER.... JOURNEY TO THE CASTLE AND SLAY THIS FIEND BEFORE HE CAN KILL AGAIN!
I, TOO, HAVE A DAUGHTER! I CAN'T JUST STAND IDLE AND SEE HER KILLED IN THIS MANNER!
YOU SPEAK FOOLISHLY, OLD MAN! DUBOFF IS IMMORTAL! WE CAN DO NOTHING TO STOP HIM!...

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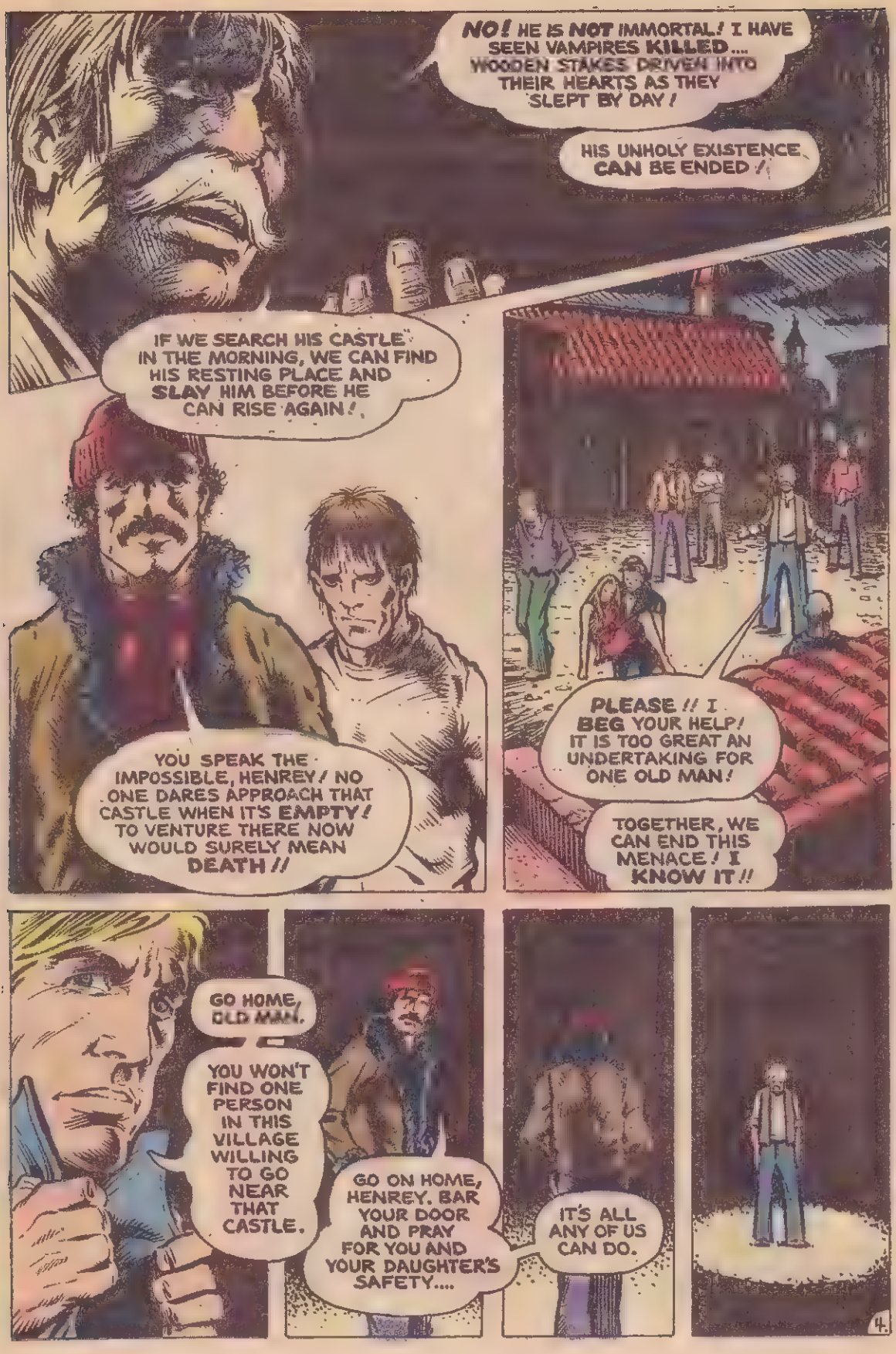
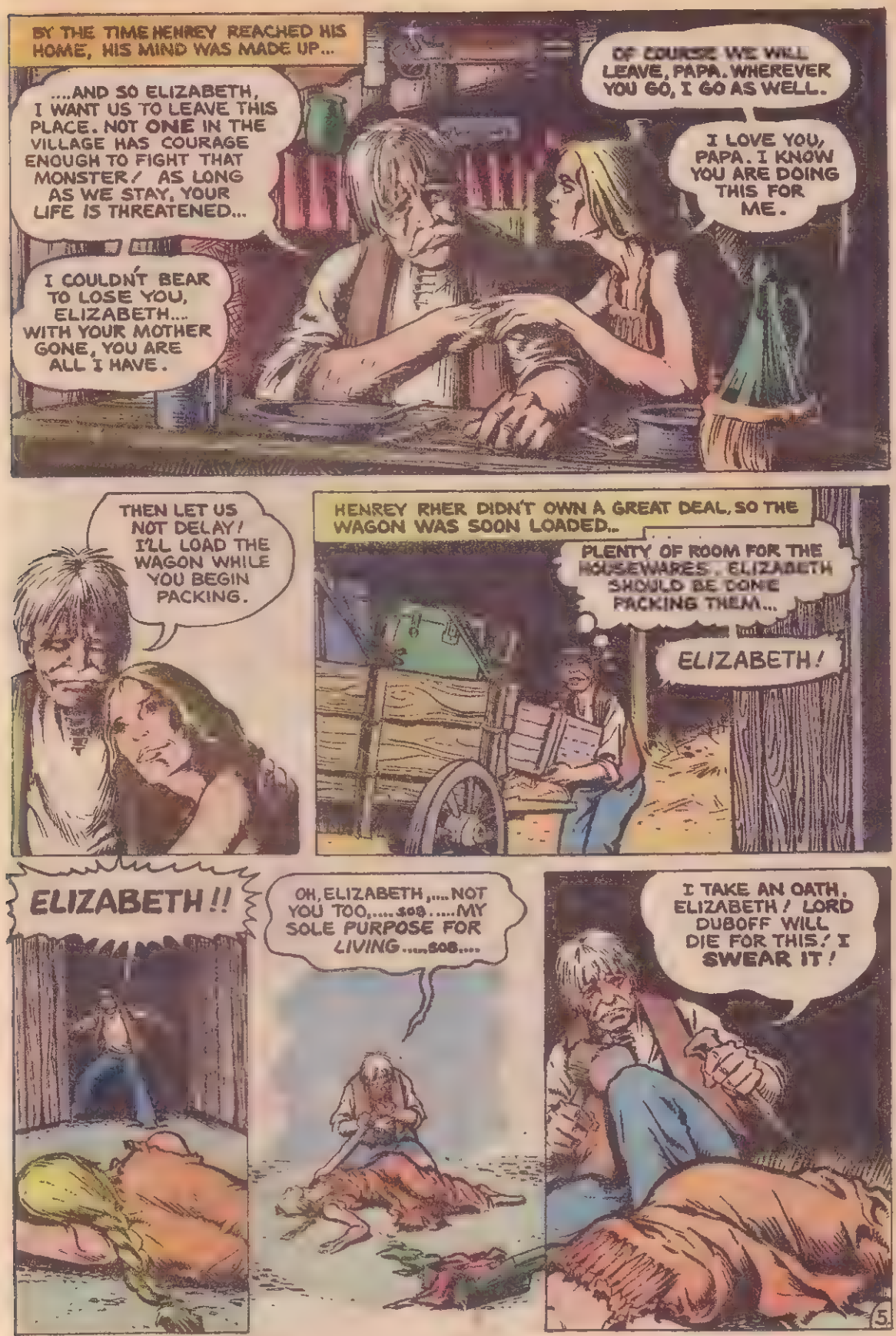
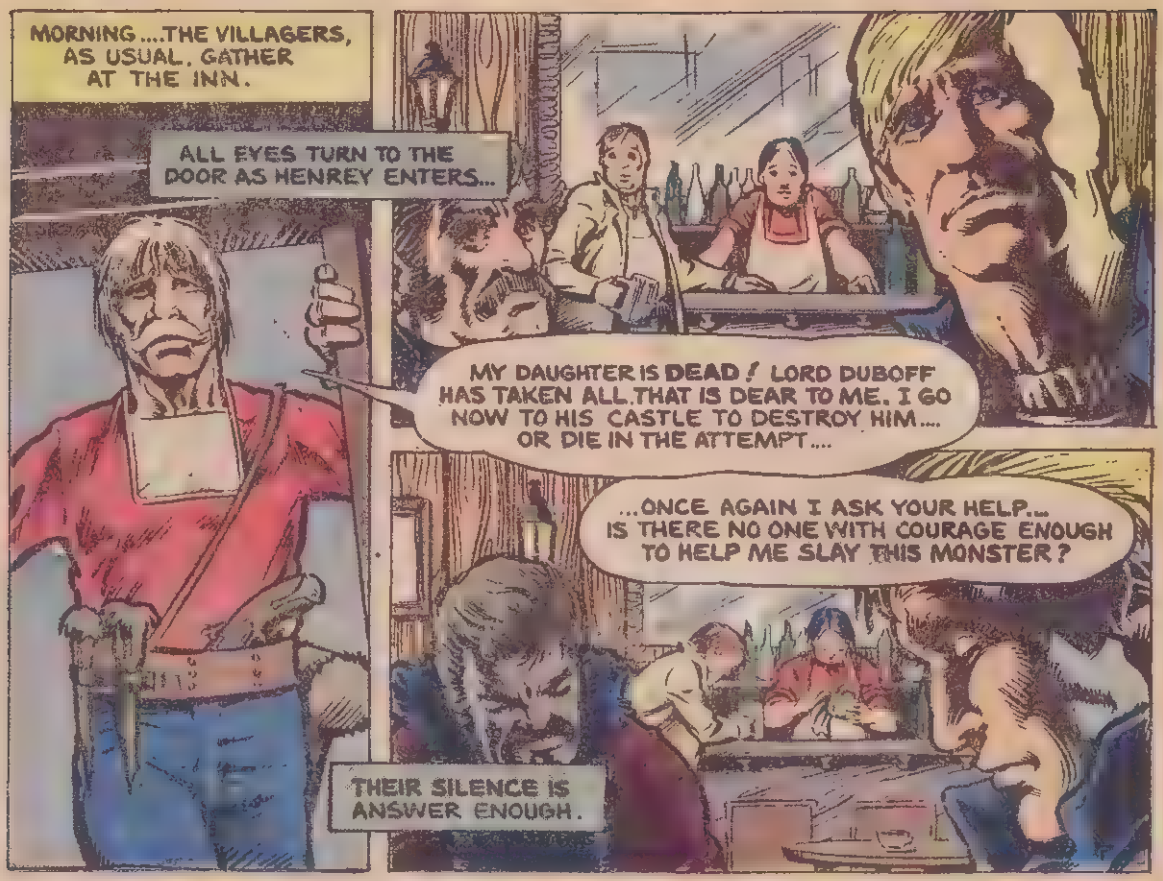
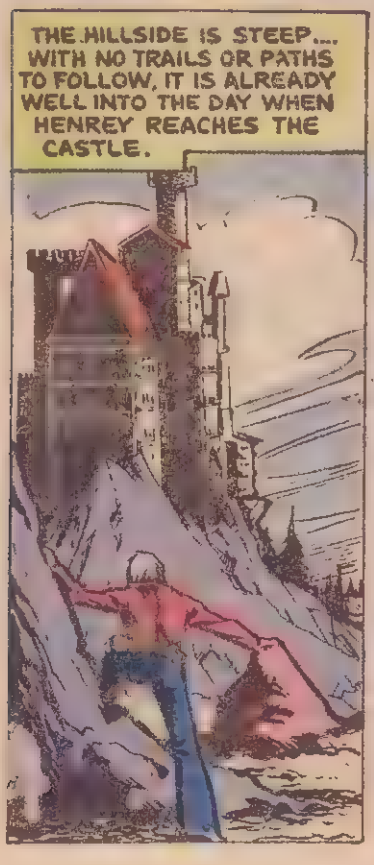

NO! HE IS NOT IMMORTAL! I HAVE SEEN VAMPIRES KILLED... WOODEN STAKES DRIVEN INTO THEIR HEARTS AS THEY SLEPT BY DAY!
HIS UNHOLY EXISTENCE CAN BE ENDED!
IF WE SEARCH HIS CASTLE IN THE MORNING, WE CAN FIND HIS RESTING PLACE AND SLAY HIM BEFORE HE CAN RISE AGAIN!
YOU SPEAK THE IMPOSSIBLE, HENREY! NO ONE DARES APPROACH THAT CASTLE WHEN IT'S EMPTY! TO VENTURE THERE NOW WOULD SURELY MEAN DEATH!!
PLEASE!! I BEG YOUR HELP! IT IS TOO GREAT AN UNDERTAKING FOR ONE OLD MAN!
TOGETHER, WE CAN END THIS MENACE! I KNOW IT!!
GO HOME, OLD MAN.
YOU WON'T FIND ONE PERSON IN THIS VILLAGE WILLING TO GO NEAR THAT CASTLE.
GO ON HOME, HENREY. BAR YOUR DOOR AND PRAY FOR YOU AND YOUR DAUGHTER'S SAFETY....
IT'S ALL ANY OF US CAN DO.
4.

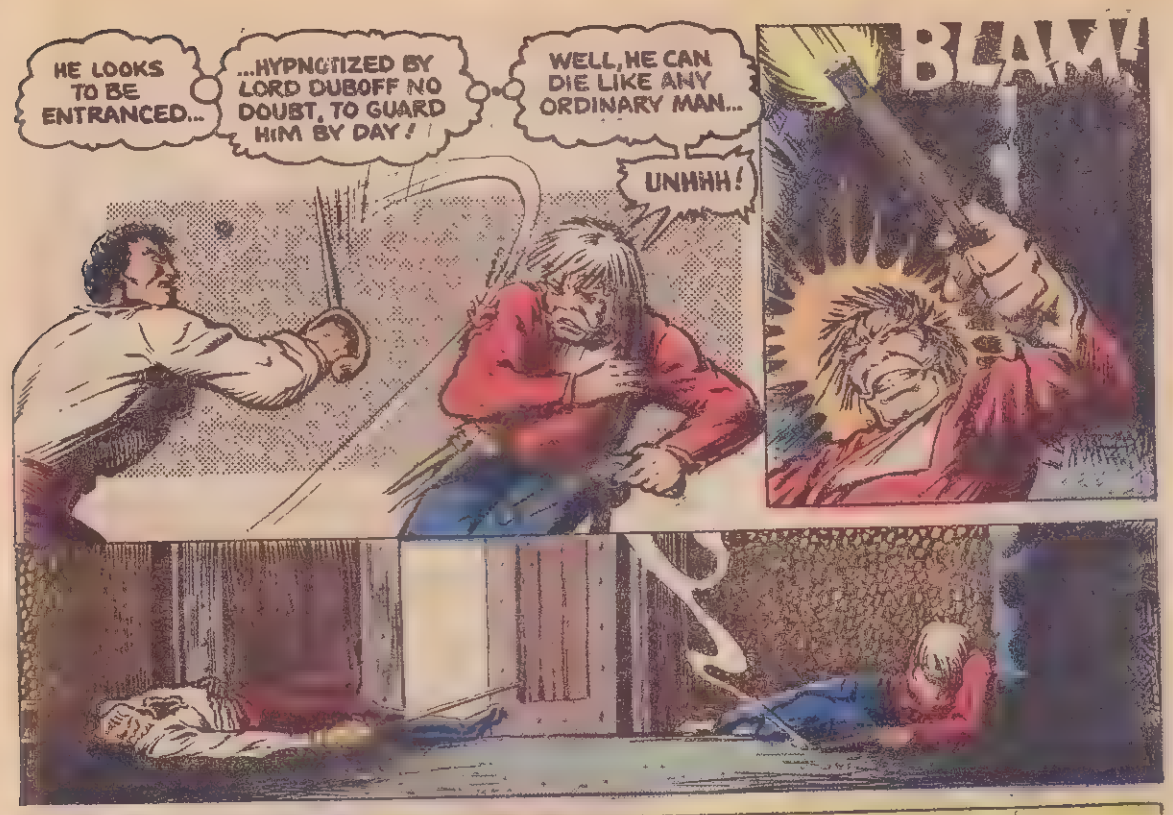

BY THE TIME HENREY REACHED HIS HOME, HIS MIND WAS MADE UP...
....AND SO ELIZABETH, I WANT US TO LEAVE THIS PLACE. NOT ONE IN THE VILLAGE HAS COURAGE ENOUGH TO FIGHT THAT MONSTER/ AS LONG AS WE STAY, YOUR LIFE IS THREATENED...
I COULDN'T BEAR TO LOSE YOU, ELIZABETH... WITH YOUR MOTHER GONE, YOU ARE ALL I HAVE.
OF COURSE WE WILL LEAVE, PAPA. WHEREVER YOU GO, I GO AS WELL.
I LOVE YOU, PAPA. I KNOW YOU ARE DOING THIS FOR ME.
THEN LET US NOT DELAY! I'LL LOAD THE WAGON WHILE YOU BEGIN PACKING.
HENREY RHER DIDN'T OWN A GREAT DEAL, SO THE WAGON WAS SOON LOADED..
PLENTY OF ROOM FOR THE HOUSEWARES. ELIZABETH SHOULD BE DONE PACKING THEM...
ELIZABETH!
ELIZABETH!!
OH, ELIZABETH,....NOT YOU TOO,.....SOB.....MY SOLE PURPOSE FOR LIVING.....SOB....
I TAKE AN OATH, ELIZABETH! LORD DUBOFF WILL DIE FOR THIS! I SWEAR IT!


MORNING....THE VILLAGERS, AS USUAL, GATHER AT THE INN.
ALL EYES TURN TO THE DOOR AS HENREY ENTERS...
MY DAUGHTER IS DEAD! LORD DUBOFF HAS TAKEN ALL THAT IS DEAR TO ME. I GO NOW TO HIS CASTLE TO DESTROY HIM.... OR DIE IN THE ATTEMPT....
...ONCE AGAIN I ASK YOUR HELP... IS THERE NO ONE WITH COURAGE ENOUGH TO HELP ME SLAY THIS MONSTER?
THEIR SILENCE IS ANSWER ENOUGH.

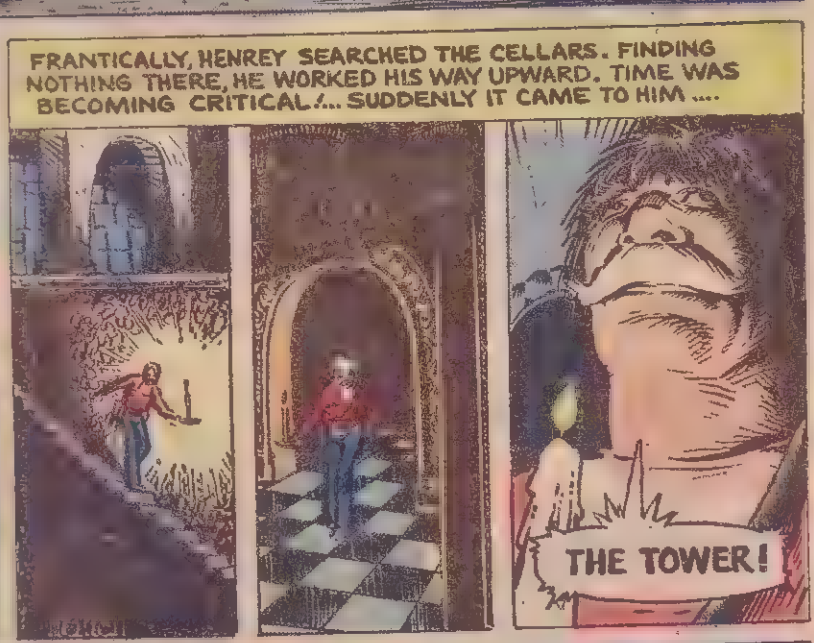

THE HILLSIDE IS STEEP.... WITH NO TRAILS OR PATHS TO FOLLOW, IT IS ALREADY WELL INTO THE DAY WHEN HENREY REACHES THE CASTLE.

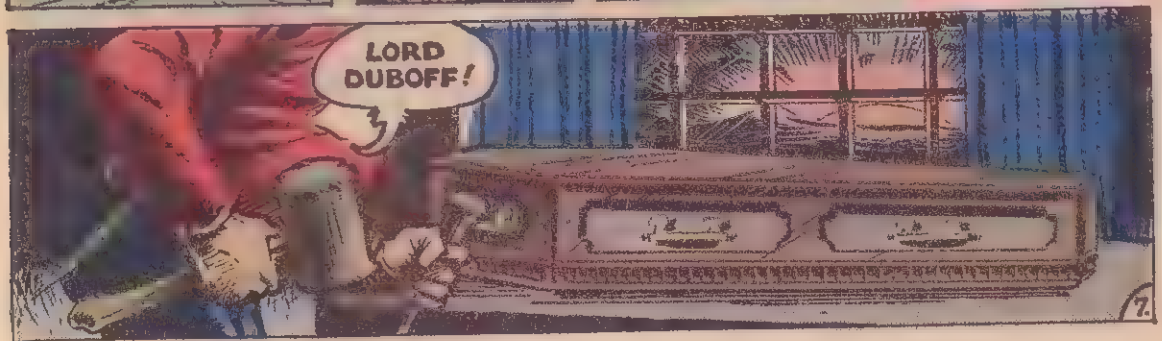
THE CASTLE IS IMMENSE! IT'LL TAKE HOURS TO SEARCH IT ALONE!

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY OLD MAN....
TO DIE !!
SPANG!
6


HE LOOKS TO BE ENTRANCED...
...HYPNOTIZED BY LORD DUBOFF NO DOUBT, TO GUARD HIM BY DAY!
WELL, HE CAN DIE LIKE ANY ORDINARY MAN...
UNHHH!
BLAM!

MUST'VE BEEN OUT FOR HOURS.... IT'LL BE DARK SOON.... GOT TO FIND THE COFFIN....


FRANTICALLY, HENREY SEARCHED THE CELLARS. FINDING NOTHING THERE, HE WORKED HIS WAY UPWARD. TIME WAS BECOMING CRITICAL!... SUDDENLY IT CAME TO HIM....
THE TOWER!


LORD DUBOFF!

NOW, MONSTER, YOU WILL DIE!... MY ELIZABETH WILL BE AVENGED!
AWAY, PEASANT! I'LL NOT DIE BY YOUR HANDS!!
INSTEAD, YOU SHALL BE THE FIRST THIS NIGHT TO SURRENDER THAT WHICH SUSTAINS ME....YOUR BLOOD!
MY BLOOD WON'T COME EASY, FIEND!
ARRGH!
BUT HAVE IT I SHALL!
WHOMP!
ENOUGH OF THAT DAMNABLE CROSS!

YOU DISGUST ME, OLD MAN! I'VE DECIDED YOUR BLOOD DOES NOT INTEREST ME!
THEREFORE I MUST ASK YOU TO LEAVE MY CASTLE....
NOW
CRASH
WHA....YOU FOOL..... ...YOU.....
AHHH
HENREY RHER IS DEAD. LORD DUBOFF IS SLAIN. THE COWARDLY VILLAGERS OF KOSLOFF WILL NEVER KNOW WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED THIS NIGHT. BUT GRIEVE NOT FOR HENREY.....HE LIVED A FULL LIFE AND LIVED IT AS A MAN,...HIS DAUGHTER HAS BEEN AVENGED.... AND WHERE HENREY'S FINAL JOURNEY HAS TAKEN HIM, SHE MAY BE THANKING HIM AT THIS VERY MOMENT.
End

CURSE of the LEOPARD MAN!

"See, Bwanna! It's the work of a leopard man!" said Brado, as he pointed at the mauled and mutilated body.

Commissioner Hawkins sucked on his pipe, exhaled tobacco smoke through his nostrils and then turned away from the corpse in disgust. Never during the twenty-five years he has spent as a police commissioner in Africa, had he seen anything as ghastly as this!

"I thought that the leopard cult was stamped out years ago," mumbled Hawkins as his men pulled the body out of the weeds and loaded it into the jeep.

"Leopard men still roam the jungle when the full moon is high, Bwanna Hawkins," explained Brado, the native policeman who had discovered the body.

"The leopard men believe that they're were - creatures, don't they?" asked the Commissioner "If I remember correctly, they go into hypnotic trances when the full moon rises and they wear leopard skins over their heads and bodies. They wear leopard's paws like gloves and murder their victims in the same way that a leopard kills its prey!"

"That's right, Commissioner," replied Brado. "A leopard man believes that he can change into a leopard when the full moon rises. This insane murderer will keep stalking and killing people unless we do something to stop him."

The Commissioner nodded affirmatively. He, too, knew that leopard men were fanatical murderers. The maniac had to be caught before it was too late.

"Leopard men usually hunt the same areas over and over again. Tonight, there's going to be a full moon. The leopard man will probably pass through this part of the jungle again. I think that we should be here waiting for him," said Hawkins.

"It'll be very dangerous, but it's the only way we'll be able to get him," agreed Brado.

"Let's get our rifles out of the jeep and build a blind," suggested Hawkins. "We'll send the rest of the men back to the village with the body! We'll stay here and wait for the leopard man!"

Minutes later, the Commissioner's men were ready to leave. Off they drove, leaving the two, brave policemen in the middle of the jungle. Quickly, Brado and Hawkins built a blind out of shrubs and bushes. When the sun sank over the mountains, the two men were ready to face the unknown. They checked their rifles, crawled behind the blind and began their all night vigil.

"Make sure you get him with the first shot, Commissioner," joked Brado. "If a leopard man bites you and you live, you'll turn into a leopard man the next time the full moon rises!"

"I wouldn't want that to happen," replied Hawkins. "I look very bad in spots!"

The two men laughed as the full moon began to rise. They were laughing so hard that they didn't hear twigs snapping in the shadows. They stopped laughing when they heard the ominous, soul-piercing roar of a leopard echo through the dark jungle.

"My god! He's right on top of us!" yelled Hawkins in alarm.

Instantly, the savage, leopard man smashed through the blind and attacked like a bloodthirsty beast. Brado was first to feel the leopard man's claws. The policeman's throat was torn open before he could scream for help. Death came swiftly, brutally and horribly.

Hawkins was knocked into the bushes when the maniac crashed through the blind. He was able to fire two shots before the leopard man turned to attack him. With two slugs buried deep in its hairy chest, the man with the head of a leopard sprang at its second

The Commissioner drew his knife as the monster came crashing down onto his chest. The life or death battle raged on and on. Victory hung in the balance as the Commissioner stabbed at the monster again and

again and again! At long last, the beast succumbed to its wounds.

It bellowed in agony, screeched in pain, roared in anguish and then dropped onto the ground. It was still and lifeless. The leopard man was dead!

The commissioner was bruised and bloody. Many times, the monster's fangs had sunk into his flesh. He was dazed, tired and weak, but he had to see the face of the leopard man. Hawkins had to know who was hiding behind that hideous, horrible, leopard mask!

Hawkins staggered over to the dead man! He bent over the body. He tugged at the leopard's head — and it didn't move! It wasn't a mask! The leopard man was a were - creature! He was half man and half leopard!

The Commissioner stared at his arm. He'd been bitten and he was still alive. Hawkins shut his eyes. Tears streamed down his cheeks. He knew what to expect the next time that the full moon rose. He'd killed a leopard man, but the leopard man wasn't dead!